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ESTABLISHING SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

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As the combat phase of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan draws to a close, post-conflict reconstruction requires security to allow the development of national military and police forces, a stable government, a functioning judiciary system, and economic progress. This paper first reviews internal and external threats for post-Taliban Afghanistan. Second, the four pillars of post-conflict reconstruction---governance and participation, justice and reconciliation, social and economic well-being, and security---must be appropriately synchronized so as to minimize "spoilers" while building Afghan governmental institutions. While the four-pillar strategy provides a balanced approach to nation-building, security is paramount in establishing the stable environment for long-term peace. Finally, U.S. policy must facilitate the employment of security forces, especially U.S. forces, in support of objectives for sustainable peace. The current policy places U.S. strategic objectives at risk because of the policy's over-reliance on the small but growing Afghan National Army. A security gap exists that severely limits advancement of post-conflict reconstruction's pillars. Afghanistan can still slip back into anarchy and civil war and thus resume its former role as a destabilizing influence in Central and South Asia. Adequate security is critical to Afghanistan's transition to sustainable peace.

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ESTABLISHING SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN

Following over twenty years of war and conflict, Afghanistan could be characterized in early 2001 as a failed state suffering under Taliban repression. Muslim radicalism, terrorism, drug trade, and ethnic violence all contributed to the downward spiral of Afghanistan's local, provincial, and national institutions. Yet the decline of Afghanistan extended far beyond its borders. Ethnic groups established regional autonomy across Afghanistan's borders to control trade, weapons sales, and drug smuggling throughout Central and South Asia. Afghan heroin dominated heroin sales in Europe. Insurgents affiliated with Afghan warlords spread instability in adjacent countries such as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Last but not least, the ruling Taliban government provided a planning and training sanctuary for Al Qaeda terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001.

Since then, international intervention led by the United States arrested Afghanistan's descent into chaos. As a result of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, coalition forces have successfully removed the Taliban government, disrupted the operations of Al Qaeda, and supported a "broad-based" Afghan government. The US continues to conduct combat operations against Al Qaeda remnants while the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) maintains security in Kabul. Simultaneously, initial elements of the Afghan National Army (ANA) are being trained by a multinational military contingent. Foreign aid and post-conflict reconstruction supports limited nation-building tasks. Unquestionably, Afghanistan has made considerable progress since the Taliban's fall from power, but the ultimate outcome remains uncertain given the breadth and complexity of the task to rebuild Afghanistan into a capable state.

At this juncture in the development of a sovereign Afghan state, establishing security from Afghanistan's many threats, both internal and external, emerges as the overriding and supreme requirement for continued progress towards stability. In a country where an entire generation has known nothing but war and deprivation, security is paramount for these fragile institutions to take hold. However, security is but one aspect of Afghanistan's post-conflict reconstruction. Governance, economic and social well-being, and judicial development must also proceed, although they move forward at a pace commensurate with the security environment. Where security is lacking, generally warlords and local militias maintain control, in some places hampering political, economic, and judicial progress.

This research project will examine why a secure environment for stabile government institutions in Afghanistan supports not only near-term goals in the War on Terrorism, but also

regional stability in Central and South Asia. This paper is comprised of three parts. First, understanding internal and external threats to Afghanistan is critical to formulating solutions for Afghan security and stability. Although longstanding ethnic rivalries pitted one group against another, other sponsoring countries inflamed Afghanistan's internal strife by providing both the money and weapons to sustain the conflict for over twenty-five years. These threats, both civil and international, will continue to pose a complex problem that will affect nation-building efforts in Afghanistan. Given the challenging security environment, the second part of this paper establishes a framework for a nation-building strategy to repair the damage of decades of war. An integrated balance of governmental, judicial, and economic programs in conjunction with security is the most reliable and least risky method to ensure long-term development and stability. To achieve sustainable peace, security ranks as the most important prerequisite to rebuilding Afghanistan's fractured institutions. Thirdly, any post-conflict reconstruction strategy depends on a U.S. policy that is both adequate and realistic. Strategy cannot succeed if policy overly restricts the methods (ways) or resources (means) with which to accomplish strategic objectives (ends). Policy must bridge the gap to strategy so that U.S. strategic objectives are both feasible and attainable. Because of current policy, achieving strategic objectives in Afghanistan, with the current security resources available, is clearly an area of concern. Stability begins with internal growth of Afghanistan's institutions, although long-term stability remains elusive unless the U.S. pursues a comprehensive regional strategy for Central and South Asia. In the past Afghanistan's inherent instability destabilized the entire region. Proper policy manifested by a comprehensive, adequately resourced strategy has the potential not only to propel Afghanistan towards a positive future, but will also reverse the downturn of the entire region. Changing the country's reputation from a destabilizing to a stabilizing influence would bolster weak governments and improve failing states.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREATS

Coups and conflicts from 1978-2001 transformed Afghanistan into the failed state of 2001. The 1978 coup, the Soviet invasion and occupation from 1979-1989, the civil war from 1992-96, and the Taliban-led government from 1996-2001 mark the major events leading to Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in 2001. Each time period before OEF contributed negatively towards the current political, social, economic, and security conditions within which nation-building efforts in 2003 operate.

A coup against Afghan President Mohammed Daoud on April 27, 1978 ended more than 230 years of Durrani Pushtun rule.[1] In 1747, Ahmed Shah Durrani was elected by his Pushtun

tribe as the ruler of what approximated the boundaries of present-day Afghanistan. Durrani established Afghanistan as a nation state and set in motion a dynasty of Pushtun rule lasting through most of the twentieth century over other ethnic groups, notably the Tajiks, Uzbeks, and the Hazara. In addition to ethnic diversity, religious divisions were also important. Pushtuns, Tajiks, and Uzbeks generally follow the Sunni school of Islam, while most Hazara represent the Shi'a Muslim minority. These tribal and religious affiliations of the various groups within Afghanistan also drew external sponsorship from neighboring nations of similar ethnic or religious background.[2]

Politics further complicated the ethnic and religious mix. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union sought and gained influence with Afghan communists resulting in the founding of the Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) on January 1, 1965. Two movements within the PDPA emerged consisting of the Khalq movement and the Parcham movement. The Khalq movement was predominately Pushtun, although the Khalq embraced a wider cross-section of the population, and favored class struggle as a means to achieve Communist domination. The Parcham movement appealed more to urbanized and western intellectuals from many ethnic groups to include Tajiks.[3] In 1973, Mohammed Daoud assumed power in a nearly bloodless coup and established a government without political allies in either movement of the PDPA except for support within the PDPA left wing from the Parchamis. Daoud's consolidation of power left the government and politicians divided over a wide range of issues from constitutional reforms to economic measures. Ultimately, Daoud instituted a number of repressive political policies and ineffective economic measures that created many enemies.[4] He repressed Islamic militants and then turned on the Communists purging them from the army and the PDPA. In a 1978 coup, Communist army officers, the same group persecuted by the dictator since the 1973 coup, overthrew Daoud. A Khalq movement member, Hafizullah Amin, seized power and began a series of brutal purges that alienated the populace and spurred Soviet fears of revolution failure in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion in December 1979 began the destruction of the balance in Afghan culture. Typically, the power of Afghanistan's central government to govern the countryside existed in equilibrium among local and regional autonomy. Communism's grasp overextended the government's centralized authority to local and regional levels beyond the historical balance.[5] As the war continued, the balance of authority, once lost, gave rise to other forces that spurred not only the rise of Afghan resistance movements such as the Mujahidin, but also the growth of Islam.[6]

The Soviet occupation and war, rather than unifying opposing tribes, actually increased the divisiveness of anti-Soviet groups not only because of existing ethnic, tribal, religious, and

ideological schisms but also because of the power rivalries of the tribal leaders. The most notable of these chasms was created by Islamic extremism that rejected modernization and perceived Western influences as corrupt and decadent. The pattern of international sponsorship also continued through the sympathetic efforts of the external sponsors: the United States, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. As an example, Osama bin Laden's role dates from 1980 when he initially provided financial resources to the Mujahidin and ultimately established a training camp for Arab Afghans by the late 1980s.[7] From this camp he and a number of other Arabs attempted to promote Sunni fundamentalism among the Afghan mujahidin.[8] Supplied, armed and trained by the United States and Britain from Pakistani sanctuaries, the Mujahidin achieved a temporary yet disjointed cooperation among tribes and ultimately prevailed over the Soviet Union. The Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan as the length of the war and continued Mujahidin resistance made the prospects of Soviet victory unachievable. The withdrawal of both superpowers from the Afghan scene in 1989 did not produce a sustainable peace as the competing factions, unable to agree on a division of power for post-Soviet Afghanistan, sought instead to advance their own interests.[9]

Amid the chaos of conflicts among multiple factions, the Taliban movement began in 1994 in Kandahar and gathered support from Pashtuns across Afghanistan as they "brought security, law, and order to areas under their control…."[10] Emerging in response to chaotic conditions as the only movement that could bring order and security, the Taliban fought corruption and lawlessness, winning massive popular support. The refugees generated by Afghanistan's twenty-year-old conflict provided scores of young men indoctrinated in Pakistani *madrasas* (religious schools) to fight against opposition groups. Former communist Khalq members, ex-Afghan soldiers and former Mujahideen commanders also served within the Taliban forces. Foremost, the Taliban's ability to provide security through the threat and application of force legitimized their rule of Afghanistan.[11] The Taliban (plural of *Talib*, an Islamic student) embraced Islamic fundamentalism as a core belief in their movement consisting of Sunni Muslims, the majority religious group in Afghanistan.[12]

Before Taliban sponsorship, Islamic fundamentalism had never flourished in Afghanistan, although growth in fundamentalism had been on the rise since the 1980s.[13] Prior to the Civil War of 1992-1996, ethnic groups co-existed in an environment of religious tolerance. Following the Civil War, the time-tested Afghan traditions of religious and ethnic tolerance began to fade. Massacres perpetrated by and against the Taliban have arguably damaged the fabric of Afghan society so deeply that reconciliation and tolerance will take some time to recover.[14] The Taliban carried the concept of *jihad* to extremes by attacking other Muslim

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groups whom the Taliban considered corrupt. Ahmed Rashid, author of Taliban, stated that "while the Taliban claim that they are fighting a jihad against corrupt and evil Muslims, the ethnic minorities see them [the Taliban] as using Islam as a cover to exterminate non-Pushtuns."[15] Coupled with their anti-modernization and anti-Western views, the Taliban sought no connection with modern ideas of economic development or progress.[16] Indeed, Afghan Islamic fundamentalism failed to recognize other Muslim ruling elites, and in the end, rejected any political system except their own.[17]

After seizing power, the Taliban failed to follow up with any significant programs that improved their governance, the economy, or the people's welfare. Their rule stifled their followers through the enforcement of strict laws based on Islam. Possessing no practical experience in government following years of Communist rule, the Taliban dominated as the majority party excluding all rival factions. The people's well-being lapsed because of a lack of jobs and no basic education opportunities.[18] The lack of any functional economic system greatly fostered the production and smuggling of heroin in Afghanistan and throughout the region. The drug trade increased to the point where 90 percent of all heroin in Europe in recent years came from Afghanistan. Monies obtained through drugs and drug smuggling supported a burgeoning weapons trade making the cycle of violence associated with drugs more deadly.[19] The Taliban levied an opium tax to generate the revenues with which to buy the arms that protect the opium-heroin production network.[20] Smuggling is big business as drug traders pay and empower warlords for passage over well-established routes. The drug trade, a direct result of the poverty in the region, provides capital to finance radical Islamic groups. Through drugs and weapons trade, militant Islamic groups grew throughout Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The international effects of Afghanistan's decline fostered instability throughout the region. The three side effects of Afghanistan's internal conflict with neighboring Tajikistan, which shares a 1,280-kilometer border with Afghanistan, have been insurgents, drugs and refugees.[21] Martha Brill Olcott states that "the civil war in Tajikistan in the early 1990s was facilitated by the sanctuary and training in guerrilla warfare that Afghanistan offered to Tajik fighters. In turn, Tajikistan's civil war enabled drug traffickers, arms dealers, and Islamic revolutionary thinkers to thrive."[22] The problem was not simply limited to Tajikistan. Other militant groups, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, attacked Uzbekistan from training camps based in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan all have significant drug trafficking problems and with the Afghan war now winding down, Tajik and Uzbek warlords, previously employed by the Northern Alliance, will return back home to their

ethnic territories bringing drug trade with them. The drug network then splits off to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and on to Kzakhstan and Russia to Europe.[23] All of this caused instability to grow in the Central Asia states, themselves struggling to maintain their governments in the post-Cold War period.

Among the regional powers, Afghanistan exported instability that led to weaker, unstable governmental institutions and societal structures. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan's pro-Taliban policy poisoned Pakistan. Drug use, arms and contraband smuggling, and related corruption rose throughout the 1990s as a result of Pakistan's close ties with the Taliban. Pakistan's modest population, now with almost three million heroin addicts, ranks among the most heavily addicted populations in the world. Pakistani elites succumbed to lures of Sunni radicalism because of the "Talibanization" of Pakistan.[24] Pakistan's interethnic links with Pushtun, first with the mujahideen and later with the Taliban, represents a disturbing trend in the country's internal political parties and with the radical Islamic politicization of the Pakistani Army.[25] Insurgents in Kashmir, if not sponsored then at least condoned by Pakistan, have been responsible for continuing violence. India's resolve to maintain the status quo by controlling two-thirds of Kashmir has been the ultimate target of a strategy fueled by Pakistan through the use of radical Islamic insurgents. Coupled with terrorist bombing within India, the potential for nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan has become greater because of the rise of Islamic extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan.[26] India's concerns over the growth of Sunni radicalism were also shared by Iran in addition to other Iranian interests.

Iran, as the dominant Shi'a state in the world, had a number of interests threatened by a Taliban-led Afghanistan allied with Pakistan. Iran opposes Sunni radicalism as well as the destabilization of its eastern border and any relationships that alter the balance of power between itself and Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, Iran's other regional competitors. Iran had much to gain from a fragmented Afghanistan since an unstable Afghan state would not threaten Iran's status as the main north-south economic corridor between Central Asia and the Middle East. Accordingly, it was not surprising that Iran supported anti-Taliban forces to include Shi'a-based or pro-Shi'a groups, Tajiks, and Uzbeks.[27] Not only Iran but also Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have, through their involvement in sponsoring opposition groups, contributed towards the fragmentation of Afghanistan and the destabilization of the region.

Indeed the fall of Afghanistan has paralleled, if not precipitated, the collective instability of the entire region. Kenneth Weisbrode states:

"Afghanistan has reemerged as the central staging area for Central Asia's most salient conflicts: sectarian, ethnic, socio-economic and ideological…In such

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environments, extreme ideologies flourish and become uncontrollable, even by their instigators. The ease with which the contained proxy conflict in Afghanistan was transformed into an internationalized civil war has set a dangerous precedent for other regional states should they ever fall prey to the same degree of internal disintegration."[28]

The "uncontrollable" nature of religious extremism fueled the generally high level of conflict in the region. Through the support of external nations in support of their proxies, civil wars and suffering were lengthened by years. The sanctuary for religious extremism, another "uncontrollable" dimension, also fostered the planning and execution of the September 11th attacks on the United States by Al Qaeda terrorists.

Since Operation Enduring Freedom began, Afghanistan has been transformed in ways unimaginable several years ago. The US attacks, which began on October 7, 2001, resulted in the defeat of the Taliban, although small Taliban and Al Qaeda groups continue to operate in the countryside and especially in pockets along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Recent assessments indicate that the war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda is in the "mopping-up" stage, and that the U.S. military is focusing on ensuring the political stability of the Karzai-led government.[29] With the military end state of destroying the Taliban and Al Qaeda nearly achieved, the issue now at hand is how to proceed to the strategic end state of a secure and stable Afghan state. Nation-building in Afghanistan encompasses a plethora of political, economic, and military variables with intertwined implications for a country torn apart by two decades of war. The recent history of Afghanistan recorded in the preceding pages represents the dynamic variables that challenge the attainment of the strategic end state. Religious extremism, ethnic rivalry, arms smuggling, drug trade, regional domination by warlords, and external sponsorship all affect the next phase of post-conflict development in Afghanistan.

POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION: THE NEXT STEP

The depth of Afghanistan's wounds after years of war have crippled its capability to perform the tasks expected of a modern nation-state. Afghanistan presents a highly complex environment for post-conflict reconstruction because of the vast scope of its problems. Currently, Afghanistan cannot provide governmental functions at the national, regional, or local level, is incapable of fostering lawful economic growth, lacks a professional security force (army and police), and cannot improve the basic well-being of the people. For Afghanistan to recover, balanced growth is needed in the following four areas: security, justice and reconciliation, social and economic well-being, and governance and participation.[30] The developments so far are promising if considering the formation of the Afghan government led by Haimed Karzai,

economic aid from both nations and international organizations, the presence of 4,500-man International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, and the initial training of a professional Afghan National Army (ANA). However, to build on these accomplishments Afghanistan needs a return to normalcy that would foster commercial business growth, small-scale industrial production, legitimate agriculture, infrastructure development, and schools.[31]

Unfortunately, normalcy cannot return without a balanced approach emphasizing security. Scott Feil, the author of a 2002 article on post-conflict reconstruction, states:

> "The four pillars of post-conflict reconstruction …are all inextricably linked, and a positive outcome in each area depends on successful integration and interaction across them. Yet, security, which encompasses the provision of collective and individual security to the citizenry and to the assistors, is the foundation on which progress in the other issue areas rests."[32]

This section will amplify the importance of a balanced approach by examining governance and participation, justice and reconciliation, and social and economic well-being in general, and security in particular. The enormity of restoring Afghanistan in each of these four areas will probably consume significant resources and time. Some objectives are certainly more important than others and thus post-conflict reconstruction concepts, especially security, should focus these precious resources in the proper sequence and proportion. As a general example, establishing a secure environment is a necessary precursor to the formation of government institutions led by locally selected leaders. With the proper conditions set by the pillars of security and government, leaders can turn to matters of economy, social well-being, and the judicial system. In this vastly oversimplified example, there are a plethora of details to consider within each pillar, but the general scheme remains the same. Conversely, if the scheme is not generally followed or lacks certain pillars thus producing an unbalanced effort, post-conflict reconstruction will probably be ineffective.

Governance and Participation. The primary indicator of post-conflict success and long-term stability of Afghanistan is the establishment of a coherent, legitimate government. In Robert Orr's opinion, the long-term success absolutely depends on government: "Having such a government is key to providing essential security, justice, economic, and social functions and to channeling the will, energy, and resources of both the indigenous population and the international community."[33] Foremost the governmental system must be strong enough to deliver goods and services to the population at the national or local level. Second, delivering those goods and services must be done in a transparent manner that avoids partisan favoritism and addresses corruption that undermines government authority and legitimacy. Third, participation by the populace enables them to voice their views towards the electoral process

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using both political parties and advocacy groups, and allows exchange of ideas through the media. Governance and participation are mutually interdependent requiring a relationship of trust. Governance provides essential goods and services to the population while participation makes the government responsive to the will and needs of the people. Over time governance and participation builds legitimacy and stability for corresponding growth in the other pillars.[34] It is important to note here that although security and justice are crucial in establishing the conditions for key governmental functions to occur, security and justice are not by themselves sufficient to provide the fundamental order, organization, and sense of purpose that government does.[35] Timing is of the essence. Governance and participation are more adaptable early in the post-conflict reconstruction process. After institutions take form and civilian attitudes about participation harden, political change will be harder.[36] The rise of stable governmental institutions producing and implementing sound policy decisions underpins near- and long-term stability essential for nation-building to occur.

In Afghanistan, the transition to a federal government system has begun, although not in the form of governance Afghanistan needs. The Bonn Accords (December 2001) sanctioned the Afghanistan Interim Authority under President Hamid Karzai until the national Loya Jirga convened in June 2002. The Loya Jirga indirectly elected the Transitional Administration that will administer Afghanistan through December 2003. Under the Transitional Administration's supervision, the new Afghan constitution will be completed and will set the stage for elections in 2004.[37] Because Afghanistan has lacked a national government for so long, the "broad-based" representative democracy currently modeled by the Transitional Authority may be less appropriate than a federation of provincial governments under Kabul's authority. On the one hand, the "broad-based" government implies a strong central authority that, considering the hardened ethnic divisions of the recent past, will precipitate competition among ethnic factions requiring greater security (both police and soldiers) to force compliance of dissenting factions. On the other hand, a federal system of government harnesses the traditional governing mechanism of the qawm (local identity groups and subtribes) while disempowering the warlord militias currently preventing provincial government from being effective.[38] The course of Afghan government depends heavily on the acceptance of the new constitution by ethnic groups willing to compromise for the long-term good of the nation.

Justice and Reconciliation. An essential post-conflict reconstruction pillar is justice and reconciliation. As an alternative to continued bloodshed, the justice system imposes the rule of law and performs another governmental function to redress past grievances. Similar to governance, a sense of urgency in establishing justice institutions grinds away at the role of the

use of force among opposition groups and supports efforts to resolve ongoing grievances peacefully.[39] Michelle Flournoy and Michael Pan stressed the importance of judicial institutions in the following statement: "Not only do these procedures prevent the recurrence of conflict, they also provide a valuable forum for individuals and communities to feel a sense of closure and to begin healing old wounds."[40] Typically, international support in post-conflict operations focuses too myopically on building a police force in the interest of public safety. A more well-rounded approach would include:

>   (1) law enforcement means such as police that are respectful of the citizenry's rights;

>   (2) a judicial system both open and impartial;

>   (3) a fair constitution and body of law;

>   (4) mechanisms for upholding human rights;

>   (5) a reasonable prison and corrections system;

>   (6) reconciliation mechanisms for past and future grievances.[41]

In the early stages of post-conflict reconstruction, the international effort supports indigenous efforts to provide the bare essentials of the justice system such as a legal code, judges, prosecutors, attorneys, and legal administrators. The urgency in erecting the judicial framework allows vital needs of the nation and people to be met. Simultaneously, its proper execution permits gains in the other four pillars of security, governance and participation, and social and economic well-being.[42]

So far the judicial system within Afghanistan has achieved little towards reinventing a fair legal system. Building from a system that completely collapsed following twenty-three years of war, a Judicial Commission was reestablished in November 2002, but has yet to attain any significant reforms. As the framework of the Afghan judiciary was developed, factions within the Transitional Government secured positions to promote their own interests. The International Crisis Group notes that other commissions such as "the Human Rights Commission have been more successful but face formidable security concerns, which the Transitional Administration and the international community have not adequately addressed, and has been delayed in establishing a nation-wide presence."[43] The last commission, the Civil Service Commission, has not been established. Following the Bonn Accords, Afghan officials restored the judicial system from the late 1970s, yet the legal system lacks basic safeguards and cannot guarantee the rule of law. Currently, defendants do not have the right to an attorney, judges are unduly influenced by factional commanders and regional governors, and in many cases, warlords usurp authority by acting as the law, the judge and the government. The lack of secular trained legal attorneys has had a profound effect on developing a system that incorporates both common law

and Islamic, or shari'a, law. Many judges have no formal legal training.[44] Until a functioning legal system is both established and enforced, reconciliation and protection of human rights to include women remains an obscure objective. Similarly the judicial system must support economic growth through protection of property and wealth while countering illegal activities such as drug production and smuggling. Protection of individual rights and resolution of past human rights abuses are essential prerequisites for a sustainable peace.[45]

Social and Economic Well-Being. Social and economic well-being are central to any achievement of post-conflict success. Along with living in a secure post-conflict environment, social and economic well-being constitute a critical feature of normalcy. The political economy of developing nations that develops and implements sound policy is paramount for economic performance. Typically, current planning for social and economic needs addresses near-term humanitarian and health needs, but lacks medium and long-term measures for continued stability.[46] To resume normalcy requires more than caring for refugees or internally displaced persons. Social and economic well-being means "providing food security, public health, shelter, educational systems, and a social safety net for all citizens. An economic strategy for assistance must be designed to ensure the reconstruction of physical infrastructure, to generate employment, to open markets, to create legal and regulatory reforms, to lay the foundation for international trade and investment, and to establish transparent banking and financial institutions."[47] As with governance and judicial development, early assistance in economic and social well-being lays the foundation for good governance of the economy and support by international financial institutions, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Conversely, without a well-laid foundation, both the private sector and the international community are reluctant to contribute or invest in unstable or mismanaged economies.[48] Eliminating "spoilers"---those who would seek to prolong conflict for the purposes of power or greed---is especially important for economic and social well-being.

Criminals prospering from illegal trade such as arms or drug smuggling seek to maintain the status quo that supports their power base. Criminals illegally usurp the role of government, extort the weak, pay no taxes and fail to contribute to societal or economic well-being.[49] A country recovering from conflict reduces the likelihood of regression back into an active state of war and improves its prospects for a sustainable peace through sound economic development and care for its citizens. "Spoilers" however can wreck more than just the economy; their interference affects governance and participation and justice and reconciliation as well. The foundation for neutralizing "spoilers" comes from the final pillar of post-conflict reconstruction: security.

Security. As previously mentioned, security represents the most immediate concern in any post-conflict reconstruction scenario. Without security and respect for the rule of law, neither governmental nor economic institutions take hold and prosper. In studies on post-conflict transitions to sustainable peace conducted by DFI International, the authors conclude that "no civil society can re-emerge when the individuals who must create it feel threatened."[50] Because of the security vacuum left in the wake of the former belligerents, urgency in establishing security is critical, especially at the beginning of the post-conflict reconstruction.[51] Comprehensive efforts must seek to retrain former combatants into a professional military organization or into non-military security forces such as border patrols, customs officers, or territorial reserves. Removing the capacity to engage in illegitimate violence may involve disarming and demobilizing combatants who may know no other job other than working in a warlord's militia. By dealing with the soldiers of the former warring parties, security is provided for the general populace, key leaders, key infrastructure, national institutions (such as courts and banks), humanitarian aid workers and peacekeeping forces.[52] Yet using international forces to shoulder the entire security burden may be counterproductive in the long term. Security forces must be careful to do enough without doing so much that indigenous security elements never take charge or that the populace seeks international security forces to resolve every minor confrontation.[53] Similarly, security operations must not disrupt the other pillars of justice and reconciliation, social and economic well-being, or governance and participation.[54]

The four pillars describe a complementary concept to support a nation-state in the aftermath of conflict. However, there are several points worth mentioning here. First, the strategy that uses the four pillars in concert achieves post-conflict outcomes that are more effective than any single pillar used by itself. Such a strategic approach maximizes international actors' leverage to accomplish development objectives while marginalizing "spoilers."[55] For example, demobilizing armed factions without a corresponding program that immediately reintegrates the former combatants back into society is counterproductive. Second, sequencing and phasing of post-conflict reconstruction are essential, since resources to conduct security or to provide economic assistance will always be limited. John J. Hamre and Gordon R. Sullivan described the importance of synchronization as follows: "In every case-specific strategy, however, the sequence designed must choose areas in which success can be demonstrated early, momentum can be built and sustained, and seeds for success can be sown early in critical areas that may take more time to demonstrate progress."[56] Lastly, with the multitude of tasks that could potentially be performed, the strategy must emphasize those aspects that most significantly influence sustainable peace when the peacekeeping force departs. According to a

DFI International study, there are fifteen conditions that, if established, provide a greater than 65% probability for an effective transition from post-conflict operations to a sustainable peace after the peace force has departed. The fifteen critical indicators represent necessary, rather than sufficient, conditions for success.

Type of Indicator	Conditions suggested in literature	Conditions that actually correlate highly (<65%) with effective transition
Military	• Political role • Internal security functions • Status of heavy weapons • Status of small weapons • Integration of combatants into government forces • Demobilization of former combatants • Reintegration of former combatants into society	• Heavy weapons cantonment • Demobilization of former combatants • Reintegration of former combatants into society
Public Safety	• Political role • Police-citizen relations • Composition • Preparedness • Incorporation of demobilized combatants into police ranks • Prison system	• Apolitical/capable police force • Police force respectful of citizens
Basic Needs	• Availability of water, food • Health conditions • Rehousing of displaced persons • Freedom of movement • Refugee repatriation • Infrastructure • Demining	• Freedom of movement • Refugee repatriation • Demining
Government	• National electoral process • Electoral laws • Viability of political opposition • Administrative bureaucracy • Judicial system • Honesty of government	• Open elections/viable opposition • Honesty of government
Economy	• Jobs • Inflation rate • Property rights • Access to consumer goods • Economic reconstruction • Structural adjustment programs • Access to international loans/investment	• Respect for property rights • Economic reconstruction
Civil Society	• Media • Freedom of speech • Norms of human rights • Grievance/reconciliation process • Private/NGO organizations • Education	• Access to independent mass media • Freedom of speech • Respect for human rights

TABLE 1: CONDITIONS ON THE DAY THE PEACE FORCE DEPARTS THAT SEEM TO INFLUENCE THE CHANCES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE[57]

From the table above, security assumes a prominent role in any post-conflict reconstruction scenario. Success is more likely in post-conflict reconstruction (when peacekeeping forces are present) if a significant effort is focused on improving the general security situation using international forces while simultaneously demilitarizing former combatants. Changing the relative balance of power internal to the country allows for the other pillars of reconstruction to be developed. Conversely, if the balance of power is not altered so as to weaken the former combatants led by those with little impetus to relinquish power, then post-conflict reconstruction tends to be stagnated.

If the leaders of opposing factions or militias are unwilling to compromise in favor of peace, this is a reliable indicator of the lack of support for peace. Leaders' pursuits of both power and high-value destabilizing commodities such as drugs reduce incentives to compromise. As "spoilers" working against the post-conflict reconstruction agenda, the failure to confront or contain their negative influences can spell failure for sustainable peace. Similarly, unscrupulous elements in adjoining countries, as well as rogue countries themselves, represent an external threat to the stability of the state.[58]

Of the conditions listed above for sustainable peace, few if any of the characteristics of a stable nation-state (freedom of speech, economic reconstruction, respect for human rights) are actually carried out by military or security forces. However, without those security forces, few if any of those characteristics will ever come to pass. Without those peace-sustaining characteristics, sustainable peace will remain elusive and the likelihood for falling back into conflict increases greatly. For almost any post-conflict setting, the desired strategic end state includes a transition from post-conflict reconstruction with assistance by the international community to a stable environment with less international involvement. Delays in achieving post-conflict reconstruction objectives postpone the gradual and long-term transition to sustainable peace.

As a failed state, Afghanistan presents a complex problem set because of the breadth and also the depth of fragmentation after over twenty years of conflict. Although policy will be discussed in the final section, the aggregate task appears so ominous as to scare away potential contributors of manpower, money, and equipment. Yet, the key to Afghanistan's future lies in its past. Twenty-five years ago, elements of stability included a legitimate government supported by disparate factions, ethnic balance, positive balance of power between the central government and provinces, harmony between the state and Islam, and the essential support by foreign powers.[59] Until recently, many of these elements of stability practically disappeared, and fostered the growth of warlords, religious extremism, ethnic conflict, arms smuggling, and drug

trade that dominated Afghan society. President Hamid Karzai's efforts to establish a pluralistic government and appeal to previously disparate elements are steps in the right direction. However, he cannot achieve the proper balance between the central government and the provincial governments so long as warlords leading mercenary armies control the provinces. With the Taliban and Al Qaeda largely defeated, the principal threats (and the centers of gravity) in the post-conflict reconstruction period now are the former members of the anti-Taliban coalition: the warlords.[60] Constructing a governmental system that can extend the writ of the central government while ensuring traditional autonomy of local leaders remains a significant challenge for President Karzai.[61] The path for post-conflict reconstruction is blocked unless former Afghan commanders relinquish their control over their areas and stop fighting with their rivals.[62] The warlords and their armies seek to maintain the status quo that keeps local and regional power in their hands. The power to wield violence allows continued profiteering from drugs and weapons smuggling. Displaced personnel have to decide to become refugees or suffer crimes of human rights abuses, rape, assault, and theft. Aid workers cannot deliver food or emergency care outside Kabul for fear of beatings or worse.[63] Afghanistan can reassert itself only when overall security improves through a combination of international peacekeepers, demilitarization of former combatants, and the adoption of ethnic tolerance towards other ethnic, religious, or ideological groups.[64]

BRIDGING THE GAP FROM POLICY TO SECURITY AND STABILITY

U.S. policy priorities began to diverge from those of President Karzai once the Taliban collapsed. America's initial goals were: (1) to bring down the Taliban regime and to neutralize the Al Qaeda organization; and (2) to capture and imprison the top Taliban and Al Qaeda leaders and cadre. U.S. leaders pursued these goals with uncompromising commitment and unflinching focus. For the newly installed Afghan government, the priorities reflected the end of Taliban and Al Qaeda domination and the beginning of a new era in Afghanistan to rebuild a sovereign nation-state. Carl Conetta described the perceptions of Afghan leaders this way: "At the national level, Afghan leaders responded to the Taliban surrender of power by shifting their emphasis to the goals of conflict limitation, reconciliation, and reconstruction. The new Afghan leadership also supported the capture and imprisonment of remaining Al Qaeda leaders and cadre---but not with the single-mindedness exhibited by the United States." [65] The repercussions of the U.S. policy to pursue remnants of the opposition while not adjusting to the post-conflict reconstruction requirements has led to divergent viewpoints of U.S. and Afghan leaders. As a result, the U.S. has been reluctant to support nation-building tasks for several

reasons. Foremost, the US seeks in the short-term to prevent Afghanistan from ever becoming a sanctuary again for global terrorism. That objective has largely been accomplished. Publicly the US will provide resources for post-conflict reconstruction but does not want to take a significant effort that ties down military resources in the mid- to long-term. Secondly, the US views its role in the world to fight, or lead coalitions, to fight enemies no other country can. The war on global terrorism requiring the use of US forces elsewhere precludes the use of US forces for peacekeeping duties, which the Bush Administration thinks anyone can do. Finally, eliminating weapons of mass destruction or regime change in countries like Iraq with ties to terrorists provides an argument against US support for nation-building. Still these reasons place the US policy at risk in Afghanistan and for the region as a whole. The end-state should be to produce a sustainable peace; otherwise, instability will be prolonged and state institutions will not take hold.

Is the U.S. perception warranted in that Al Qaeda and Taliban factions constitute the most significant threat to Afghanistan? Should pursuit of that goal not only take priority over but also exclude all other priorities? Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. envoy to Afghanistan, recently warned the Afghan President to take stronger action to stabilize Afghanistan by capturing Al Qaeda and Taliban militants who continue to operate along the Afghan-Pakistani border.[66] Yet, by Afghanistan's standards, the country is currently more stable than at any time in recent history. Combat forces from Operation Enduring Freedom report that only five of thirty-two provinces in Afghanistan continue to harass OEF elements.[67]   Although pursuit of militant factions in the five remaining provinces supports achievement of the U.S. military end state in the war against Al Qaeda, it is now the warlords who threaten the peace, impede post-conflict reconstruction and thus hamper achievement of the strategic end state: a stable and secure Afghanistan.[68] A degree of order has been imposed on Afghanistan by the degradation of Al Qaeda/Taliban elements, but the job is only partially done. In stating the importance of post-conflict security, Scott Feil observes: "Just as the absence of conflict is not peace, the imposition of order is not the provision of security."[69] To build a secure and stable Afghanistan, the U.S. must realign its strategic objectives to reflect the importance of assisting Afghan post-conflict reconstruction goals.

In addition to the divergence of goals, U.S. policy has also been based on the commonly accepted principle that foreign armies in Afghanistan are seen as invaders.[70] Inherent in this viewpoint, foreign armies seeking to occupy Afghanistan would attempt to colonize or dominate the nation. For that reason, the U.S. avoided that perception by employing enough troops to achieve the military end state while keeping the U.S. "footprint" small. Consistent with our

strategic goals to destroy the militants, Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz has sought "to avoid creating the expectation that the United States can solve all of that country's [Afghanistan's] problems…not to take sides in Afghanistan's internal quarrels." [71] On the contrary, warlordism, the source of internal quarrels, is exactly what is preventing post-conflict reconstruction from progressing. A peacekeeping effort that provides a security presence is essential to Afghan development. Peacekeeping, generally a multilateral UN-sanctioned action, does not have colonization or imperialism in its application. [72] Further, peacekeeping in support of a post-conflict reconstruction concept produces exceedingly positive outcomes in the forms of Afghan self-government, infrastructure repair, economic assistance, and school construction. Neither the government nor the Afghan people have been opposed to these outcomes, especially since U.S. presence is condoned and legitimized by the Afghan government. Secretary Wolfowitz also adds the following: "But along with self-government must come self-sufficiency in terms of Afghanistan's security." [73] Secretary Wolfowitz's perspective contradicts many lessons learned in the recent U.S. nation-building experiences; certainly in Panama, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the governments in power could not have been self-sufficient in providing security. It is interesting to note that in current plans for post-conflict operations in Iraq in 2003 that the peacekeeping forces number in the tens of thousands while in Afghanistan, peacekeeping forces are not considered as essential or even required. Applied to Afghanistan, where the fragmentation and disintegration greatly exceeded the other instances, it is unreasonable to expect that Afghanistan can solve all its own problems following the absence of effective government for over two decades. [74] U.S. policy will have to adjust if peace and stability are to take hold in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, currently the U.S. executes a strategy so resource-constrained that the forces involved can only achieve limited objectives. Currently, there are three elements with security responsibilities in Afghanistan. The 7,000-man force of Operation Enduring Freedom, the 4,500-man force of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) based and exclusively focused on Kabul, and lastly the newly formed Afghan National Army (ANA). In November 2002, the Bush administration announced that it would dedicate fewer resources to search for Al Qaeda/Taliban remnants and more to post-conflict reconstruction tasks such as stabilizing the country, fostering economic activity, and expanding trade with neighboring states. [75] One of the primary mechanisms to accomplish this task will be a network of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) comprised primarily of U.S. Army Civil Affairs personnel who will be deployed to key cities. Each team possesses limited organic security capability. Although a step in right direction, the PRTs possess only a defensive capability and need a more robust

capability to deal with the local warlord militias. For security to occur the local balance of power must be altered. As stated in the preceding section, former combatants must be demobilized and reintegrated back into society. Use of U.S. troops in an expanded role and the employment of PRTs are excellent initiatives, but without a more capable security force, the strategy will only scratch the surface of warlord power. Until security forces confront warlord domains, the forbidden fruits of warlord illegitimate activity such as arms and drug smuggling continue unabated.

In an environment where internal factions and neighboring states seek to maintain the status quo, the weight of responsibility for Afghan security falls on the one institution least able to provide it at this time: the Afghan National Army. The ANA is currently planned to number around 60,000 men, yet warlord armies account for probably 200,000-250,000 men who know no skill other than fighting.[76] In building the initial ANA structure, the ANA leadership has been quite generous through its appointments to former warlords, although the ethnic balance clearly favors anti-Pashtun forces. In February 2002, General Fahim, the Minister of Defense, selected 38 generals for the new ANA structure of which 37 were Tajik and one was Uzbek. Selection seems to depend on who fought on the anti-Taliban side.[77] The ethnic background of Afghanistan deserves special treatment when forming an army. A multi-ethnic government with a single-ethnic Afghan army will not serve the nation well in the long run. Initial reports of ANA professionalism have been positive; however, while the ANA grows, a security gap exists that neither Operation Enduring Freedom forces nor the ISAF are willing to fill. Momentum will be lost unless the U.S. leads the security effort for post-conflict reconstruction.

FIGURE 1: SECURITY GAP
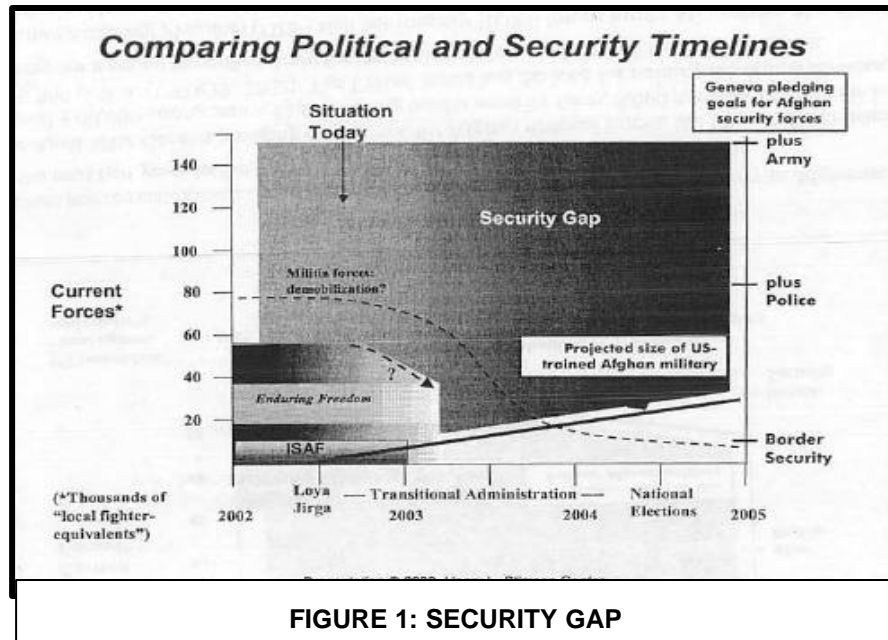
The figure above includes security forces of all kinds during the next two years. The near-term goal for Afghan national forces includes a 60,000-man army, a 12,000-man border security force, an 8,000-man air force, and 70,000-man police force. International forces consist of approximately 10,000 U.S. personnel supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and 4,500 personnel serving under the ISAF in Kabul. Because the OEF and ISAF forces are more effective than local fighters, especially when factoring in airpower, the OEF and ISAF are represented by "capacity bands" rather than lines. Although demobilization of warlord militia is critical, little if any demobilization has taken place so far. From the timelines developed by William Durch above, he concludes that "at projected rates of training the Afghan Transitional Authority will have, at the end of the two year transition period, less than a third of the military forces it seeks."[78]

The historic influence of adjacent states on Afghanistan will certainly continue. Through policies engaging the U.S. and regional states, any positive, constructive direction these nations take will assist the Afghans. Regional security assistance programs, anti-drug, and anti-arms smuggling all have the potential to reinforce weak and ineffectual governments of Central Asia. Warlords, arms smuggling, and the drug trade all represent regional problems requiring regional solutions. With stronger governments and increased control, economic and aid incentives can strengthen national power. The reverse is also true. Unstable governments in Central or South

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Asia will also neutralize Afghan successes. Drug or arms smuggling operations may be displaced from Afghanistan only reemerge at a later time to cause unrest and instability. Elements from Iran, the Central Asia Republics, and Pakistan all support their affiliated groups within Afghanistan; U.S. policy must, as a minimum, counter the spoilers and preferably build long-term, stability-reinforcing relationships.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2003, the situation in Afghanistan bears little resemblance to that of the pre-September 2001 scenario. Following Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan now has a golden opportunity to reverse the forces that over the past twenty years had broken it apart. However, the nation-state does maintain a tenuous position, because its reformation is indeed far from complete. Considering Afghanistan's unique history of ethnic, religious, and political diversity, the development of multi-ethnical and multi-religious tolerance in a federal government offers the best formula for long-term Afghan stability. Post-conflict reconstruction pillars of governance and participation, economic and social well-being, and justice and reconciliation require the participation of all Afghans. However, successful post-conflict reconstruction and sustainable peace (after international forces depart) are severely impeded at this stage by the lack of the last reconstruction pillar---security. Post-conflict environments are by their nature unstable; the previously governmental structure, the police forces, and the armed forces may be non-existent or reorganizing following major conflict. Rebuilding national, provincial, and local governmental institutions provides the structure around which post-conflict reconstruction occurs. That structure never develops when security is lacking. In Afghanistan, the principal effort has been to demilitarize Kabul and to secure it so the central government may form. Little has been done outside the capital. The provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) are currently the principal means to establish a presence outside Kabul but thus far only in Gardez, Bamian, and Konduz.[79] Although a positive step, the PRTs are too few in number and too lightly armed to coerce opposition forces or to conduct "de-warlordization."

The means available to provide more security outside the capital , the Afghan National Army, places the entire strategy at risk. The security gap that exists between the present total lack of security and the time when adequate ANA security forces can establish a presence in key cities and the countryside will take years. Meanwhile international donors and non-governmental supporters will lose interest with the lost momentum and the perceived lack of progress; such support may not be regained. ISAF forces, although asked to consider an expanded presence outside Kabul, cannot or will not do so. U.S. combat forces of Operation

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Enduring Freedom continue to eliminate opposition elements in a combat role and as yet have not assumed any significant formal peacekeeping responsibilities during post-conflict activities. Unless the U.S. assumes the leadership role and also contributes forces for an expanded multinational ISAF (25,000 men), the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan will be delayed until the ANA assumes its duties. Security in the short-term cannot be realized and stability in the long-term cannot be sustained.

If the means were available, success would still depend on a comprehensive strategy. The strategy would focus on provincial centers and use a balanced approach of security, government and justice, and economic assistance to achieve the desired effects of a safe and secure environment free from warlord influence. The specific measures must focus on the appropriate measures to make provincial and local areas safe. For example, demobilizing warlord militias (a military program) combined with reintegration of former warriors into society (an education, training, and economic program) produces the desired outcome of more security for economics or government functions to develop. Coordination among other groups providing resources as part of this integrated strategy is critical.

By far the most important aspect to improve security and stability in Afghanistan will be U.S. policy. Afghanistan matters to the U.S. for several reasons. First, Afghanistan must not be allowed to regress back into its pre-war situation of a corrupt and brutal government that supports terrorists. For the United States, failed states offer many advantages to terrorist who would do harm to the U.S. and its citizens. The establishment of a functional state supports the War on Terrorism. Second, if Afghanistan exported its instability prior to American intervention, Afghanistan can now be a stabilizing influence in a region comprised of marginal and failing states. For this to come to fruition will take years, but regional stability emanating from Afghanistan could arrest the downward spiral of the Central Asia republics and Pakistan. Third, the U.S. needs credibility in the region and the Muslim world that can only be gained from successful policy outcomes. U.S. support for a functional Afghan state could provide an opportunity to reverse anti-American attitudes in the region. Improving U.S. standing must extend beyond a single policy success, but Afghanistan is the place to start.

U.S. policy needs to expand beyond winning the wars to include building a sustainable peace. The U.S. military does have a role to play in post-conflict security. The combat forces can still pursue opposition remnants, but the time is long overdue for peacekeeping forces that can assist Afghanistan through the post-conflict reconstruction phase to achieve sustainable peace. Security provides the foundation to move beyond the military end-state that terminates the conflict and on to the strategic end-state that resolves the conflict. In every other post-

conflict scenario such as Panama, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo, security played an important role in getting the country back on its feet. Afghanistan is no exception.

WORD COUNT = 8627

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[3] Henry Bradsher, <u>Afghanistan and the Soviet Union</u> (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985), 50-54.

[4] Ibid., 59.

[5] Larry P. Goodson, "Afghanistan: Picking Up the Pieces," <u>Hoover Digest</u> no. 1 (2002); available from http://www-hoover.stanford.edu/publications/digest/021/goodson.html; Internet; accessed 28 April 2003.

[6] Cronin, 12.

[7] Ahmed Rashid, <u>Taliban</u> (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2001), 132.

[8] Cronin, 13-14.

[9] Larry P. Goodson, <u>Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban</u> (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 19. These factions could also be qawms. Qawms are defined as any communal group, including village, extended family, tribe, or ethnic group. The Qawm represented the most basic social/political organization for the local Afghan. Individuals did not identify with any group beyond the qawm.

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[32] Scott Feil, "Building Better Foundations: Security in Post-conflict Reconstruction," <u>The Washington Quarterly</u> 25, no. 4 (2002): 98.

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[35] Ibid., 147.

[36] Ibid., 151.

[37] Larry P. Goodson, "Afghanistan's Road to Reconstruction," <u>Journal of Democracy</u> 14, no. 1 (January 2003), 88-89.

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